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ISRAEL AND THE EDUCATION OF THE CULTURALLY DEPRIVED.

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ISRAEL CAN ACT AS A LABORATORY TO TEST WHETHER WESTERN CULTURE HAS THE UNDERSTANDING AND SKILLS TO INTEGRATE A RADICALLY DIFFERENT, "DEPRIVED" CULTURE INTO THE MAINSTREAM OF SOCIETY. ORIENTAL JEWS, A MINORITY WHO WILL SOON BECOME A MAJORITY GROUP, HAVE A CULTURE WHICH DOES NOT FIT INTO A MODERN TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY. THEIR PATRIARCHAL CULTURE WITH ITS ORAL TRADITION NOW FACES AN ABRUPT SHIFT INTO A WELFARE STATE IN WHICH SCHOOL IS THE MAJOR ROAD TO ACHIEVEMENT. THE SZOLD INSTITUTE IN JERUSALEM HAS IDENTIFIED THE PARTICULAR CHARACTERISTICS OF ORIENTAL CHILDREN THAT THE SCHOOLS SHOULD CONSIDER (1) THESE CHILDREN ARE UNABLE TO ORGANIZE AND COMMUNICATE, SKILLS WHICH TEACHERS EXPECT, (2) THEIR PARENTS DO NOT SEE THE CHILD AS A "PERSON" BUT MERELY AS HAVING A "ROLE" IN THE FAMILY, (3) THESE CHILDREN DO NOT USE DRAMATIC PLAY WHICH WOULD TRAIN THEM IN THE SKILLS OF INTERACTION AND ROLE-TAKING, AND (4) THEY ARE AGGRESSIVE, COMPETITIVE, CRITICAL, AND MOCKING. TO ALTER THESE BEHAVIORS AND ATTITUDES, THE SCHOOLS SHOULD BEGIN TO EDUCATE THEM AT AGE TWO, AND SCHOOL PROGRAMS SHOULD REQUIRE SPECIAL TEACHER TRAINING, DIAGNOSTIC TESTING, AND APPROPRIATE CURRICULAR MATERIALS. IN GENERAL, THE CURRENT NOTION OF "FORMAL EQUALITY" IN CHILDREN'S RECEIVING AN EDUCATION SHOULD BE REPLACED BY THE IDEA OF "FUNCTIONAL EQUALITY," THAT IS, EQUAL PREPARATION BY UNEQUAL MEANS. (NH)

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ISRAEL AND THE EDUCATION OF THE CULTURALLY DEPRIVED

The education of the culturally deprived is a problem which concerns America, concerns Israel, and, in a larger sense, concerns the world. Having spent six months in Israel's agency for research and development in this area of involvement, I want to present what I can of a broadening and deepening perspective as I experienced it.

In America, we are concerned with the education of the culturally deprived because we have recently become aware of the growing disparity between those who are able to progress through education into positions of self sufficiency and social value and those who are not thus able to progress. The "culturally privileged" are those who <u>can</u> participate in the course of progressive development; the "culturally deprived" are those who <u>cannot</u>. This is the operational meaning of our basic terms.

On the national scene, we have come to be aware of this phenomenon in such as Appalachia and the inner-city slum where a poor area, unaided, grows progressively more incapacitated, separated further and further from the main stream of American life and development. Our society is a rapidly developing systems-society. That which produces an interlocking of different orders of poverty to accelerate poverty produces an interlocking of different orders of privilege to accelerate privilege. The dynamics are such as to propel the culturally privileged into greater privilege and the culturally deprived into greater deprivation. The breach widens, and the integrity of our society as a working system is threatened.

The phenomenon of the spreading extremes which shows in our country shows also in the world setting. The disparity between the "haves" and the "have-nots" is growing. This spread, and the knowledge of the progressive

spread, introduces great tension between the privileged peoples and the deprived. The "have-nots", with their exploding awareness and their exploding populations, carry dynamite; the "haves", with exploding knowledge and final power for total destruction carry the nuclear bombs We walk the shrinking earth together, seeking peace, and playing games with death.

We who, in America, face the problems of the culturally deprived, are therefore facing, in laboratory sample, the problems of the people of the world. What is presented to us here as a yet modulated phenomenon is, in the world, a stark phenomenon. What is yet amenable to us as something comprehensible is something that must come to be comprehensible on a world scale. The intelligence we seek on this problem is not alone intelligence for guiding ourselves in the concretions we face here, but intelligence sought for the leadership of peoples not present here.

We need to see that what we face here in America is what Western man has formed for the world to face; what Western man has created, he is now responsible for. He has let loose a construction of how progress is to go for mankind, how nature's powers are to be harnessed, how people are to be fed and kept in health, and how men are to be involved in give-and-take to make their life possible, together. Having created, Western man must live with his creations, and now go on from there.

In the Western construction, education has a crucial place, for the systems we have created are man-made systems, and men must educate men to make these systems work. Children are not born into the world with ready made knowings of the systems of finance that permeate our doings here or in the world--or the systems of communication, or transport, or manufacture, or law, or education. Children do not come from the plains or the mountains or even the cities of the world prepared by their breathing and eating and

daily converse with their friends to operate a hydro-electric plant, or a hospital, or a computer, or a welfare agency, or a rocket to the moon. There are languages for these tasks, and it will be only by consciously designed educational programs that children can be readied to take the progression on from there.

Education is as necessary for the world as it is for America, and we who are concerned with education in America can know that what we learn here in forming education suited to its task is learning yearned for elsewhere in the world. We can know, too, that elsewhere in the world, there are those who are confronting the problem as do we. We are not alone either in our need or in our knowing. There are other agencies, other countries, other people one can call by name. From these people and their situations, one can learn.

Hence Israel!

Why Israel, particularly?

Because Israel is laboratory for the world in the forming of one people from among many peoples--a laboratory for this generation to test whether or not the Western mind and Western culture has grown big enough to include all other cultures, and wise enough to provide, at the level of a nation, a way for progress of deprived peoples in the pattern of Western progression. Is Western man's comprehension great enough? Is his perception keen enough? Is his thinking elemental enough? How universal is he? Can he form, from his roots, a culture adequate to integrate other cultures not his own? Can he, the privileged one, guide a newly forming nation into a fruition of democratic form if its majority is made up of peoples not of Western root, i.e. "culturally deprived," as we have used the term? Is the pattern of Western life to survive in a world where, in truth, the great majorities of men are deprived?

This is the test, and it is important to you and me, whether we have heretofore been aware of this or not, that we know the teachings of this laboratory, Israel's test and fate, that we may better know with what we are to deal, in the setting of the world, as we put ourselves to test and shape our fate, in turn.

I say Israel is a laboratory. Let me deliberately state for you some of the hypotheses I see her putting to test. Subsequently I will explain.

1. That the world community is ready to support a nation authorized by the United Nations.

2. That a modern Western nation can be born and sustained in the ancient Middle East.

3. That peoples from many continents and many nations, many races and many cultures, can form one people, one nation, and one culture, and that this can be done now.

4. That peoples of many tongues, forming a majority in a land where they are immigrants with a language not natively their own, can be taught a common language so quickly and so well that it can serve as working daily language for the whole.

5. That an agrarian people can be formed of non-agrarian peoples, and a technological people can be formed of non-technological peoples.

6. That a welfare state can benefit from private enterprise and private enterprise can benefit as well.

7. That deserts can be made into gardens, swamps into fertile fields, and mountains of stone can be made into vineyards and forests.

8. That the seas can eventually be made to come inland, to shed their salt, and to provide great new areas for man's habitation.

9. That the atom can eventually be made the source of power, lacking coal and oil.

10. That stability and tolerance can be born from chaos and pain.

11. That a nation can be formed as a refuge for persecuted peoples and yet not use persecution as a policy of its own.

12. That a nation can be ringed with potential enemies and yet not make enmity its policy in return.

13. That a nation can give to military use a great portion of its resources and important years out of the lives of its youth, and yet not be militaristic.

14. That a nation can be built whose prime power is intelligence, and whose prime export is intelligence.

15. That ancient wisdom can be included in modern wisdom, and the two can do honor to one another.

16. That a land which was once the womb of many religions can be womb, once again, for the emerging spirit of man.

17. That children from non-democratic cultures, culturally deprived, forming a potential majority, can, in one generation, be so educated as to be a working force for democracy in their time.

18. That education can <u>be</u> salvation.

These express, ~~in~~ summary form, the meaning of Israel to me. May I expalin more fully to you.

Israel was founded in 1948 by the United Nations as one of the first of the new post-war nations. She was designed by Europeans to receive the refugees from Europe and to be a homeland for the Jewish people. She depends on continuing international support, and especially on political and economic support from Europe and America. She is located, not in the West, but squarely in the Middle East. Her land is situated at the confluence of the ancient and current civilizations of the West, Africa, and Asia. Lying at the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, she is bordered by four Arabic nations: Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon. She is a small country, about the size of Massachusetts. Her land is a long, narrow strip, at one point no more than 12 miles wide, extending a length nearly twice that of Massachusetts.

In 1948, her population was about 650,000. Early immigrations from Europe were followed by immigrations from all over the world, but primarily, in recent years, from the Middle East and Africa. She now has a population of about 2,500,000, nearly quadruping her numbers in seventeen years.

She inherited Hebrew as her native tongue, but it was a language, ancient in its root, which had to be up-dated for modern use and taught to the thousands who flooded her shores, knowing other tongues. The minority, knowing the native tongue, have had the majority to teach, and they have done so. Hebrew now serves as the working daily language, though, in her twenty-five daily newspapers, there are yet issues in German, French, Hungarian, Arabic, Polish, Yiddish, Bulgarian, English and Roumanian.

Her immigrants from Europe were primarily tradesmen and professionals coming from towns; her immigrants from the Middle East and Africa had never known modern agriculture or manufacture. Yet she has developed a successful agriculture and the beginnings of manufacture, as well as successful trade and professional service.

Since her immigrants have been largely refugees, poor, without possessions or knowledge of how to succeed in a newly forming land, she has had to look after their welfare, their health, their housing, their induction into the economy, their training and education. Working from scratch, she has had to build the systems which would make these endeavors possible--a welfare system, a health system, a housing system, an economic system, an educational system--which she has formed in the context of a deomcratic welfare state. She has retained strong controls over capital investments, wages, prices, and flows of money. At the same time, she has needed the initiative of the private entrepreneur and has made provision for him in the context of the welfare state--strange bedfellows who, nevertheless, bed together.

Two-thirds of her land is wasteland, desert and barren mountain. Of the one-third amenable to agriculture, half needs irrigation to be productive. There is water, at present, for but half of that half. There must be water for the balance. Her surrounding seas are salt; she must solve the desalina-

zation problem. She has a limited range of mineral resources, mining what she has. She has no native coal and little oil; she lacks fuel, except as she ships it in at great expense. She must solve the power problem, and she works at atomic power to solve that need. She is cast on a course which requires technological advance and the systems of Western society if she is to survive and grow. She cannot go back to a form of life which would be native to her middle Eastern setting; she must move ahead in the construction projected by Western man.

Among the adults who have built the nation and who now form her controlling population, there are few who have not known, from personal experience, the hell of utter human depravity, degradation and chaos. One out of four, the story goes, have themselves been in some kind of concentration or detention camp. Yet, in the face of that experience, these people have formed a society remarkably composed in its compassion and restraint. Turning inwardly to her varied races and peoples, she is resolved not to practice persecution, overt or subtle. The struggle is not easy. Turning outwardly, facing Arabic neighbors who are avowedly hostile, she is resolved on a course of defense but not of aggression. The struggle still continues.

All youths, boys and girls alike, are required to serve in the military for a period approximating two years. This serves as a melting-pot for diverse nationalities and sectors of the population. The program is primarily educational, staffed by men of broader vision than the military alone. The youth do not turn out to be militaristic, though they can well perform their defense duties. Though monthly there are border skirmishes and fresh propaganda threats, there is singularly little response of panic or alarm, less, I think, than we are accustomed to in our often primitive press. It is as though these people, knowing death, are not frightened of it. What they value most is getting ahead with life.

If it can be said that ancient Israel sat at the critical juncture of cultures from Europe, Africa, and Asia, it can also be said for modern Israel, now. In a world of many emerging nations, she is located in space and time to be readily accessible as prospective model for these struggling peoples, and particularly those in awakening Africa and Asia. There flows back and forth between these lands and Israel a constant stream of technical assistance teams; scholarships go well beyond a thousand for students and leaders who come yearly to Israel's doors, seeking knowledge, feeding hope for the future of their lands. To them, Israel has made good in the desert sands and barren mountains of the Middle East; if she can do this, then she is worthy of leadership for those who have similar poverties to face. Unlike the United States or Russia, she need not be feared for her encroaching military or economic power; she can never have such power; she is far too small and restricted. Her value and her power is her know-how in the critical business of developing everything from nearly nothing, and her compassionate intent to be of help to those so sorely in need. (Her model is not now limited to the continents she touches; she is also model, refuge, and on-coming teacher for peoples in South America).

Israel's primary export is, therefore, her intelligence--intelligence concerning ways in which the deprived peoples of the world can shape their acts to form societies able to benefit from the construction-for-progress which Western man has set loose on the world. She is symbol of and laboratory for working out mankind's most pressing present problem--how to include the peoples of the world in one people, how to include the deprived so that they may inherit the promise of the privileged.

As one comes to know these things of modern Israel, and comes also into the ancient trails and on to the ancient mountain cites where men, once before, met the elemental questions, one cannot escape the feeling that Israel, once again, has her potent challenge to find a way in which all men can become one. It is not amiss to note that it was in this location in the world, where peoples of many kinds had their confluence and their need to find a way to live together, that great religions had their birth, seeking universal ground for the unity of man. It is not amiss, either, to note, as we have done, that this is once again the active meeting ground, and that the solutions can be no less elemental than they were before. The struggle is engaged, and Western man would do well to know that here, in this laboratory, his culture, his spirit, his intelligence, his projection for the further course of man is up for test.

This is potent ground for learning, and it is the teachings I received there that I would now bring to you for its potential meaning here.

I need first to explain more fully what I mean by the "culturally deprived" in Israel. These are the peoples coming relatively recently from the Middle East and Africa, the samples studied coming mainly from Morroco, Yemen, and Iraq. These people are called "Oriental Jewish people" to differentiate their cultural background from "Western Jewish people." The fact that we call these people "culturally deprived" does not mean that they have been without a sturdy culture. It has been this culture, and its rich oral tradition, that has made possible their survival for a thousand and two thousand years in relatively confined communities. Their culture has had a discipline, indeed, but it is nevertheless a culture "deprived," by our definition, since it does not fit the pattern of progression for a

modern technological-systems-society.[1]

[1]The term, "culturally deprived," is frequently objected to because it suggest "lacking in any culture at all." In Israel, the Hebrew term in current use means "in need of promotion," softening the previous inference and expressing more accurately the national attitude toward the problem. I have retained the use of the term, "culturally deprived," however, because I have wanted to emphasize the dynamics of the social phenomenon of a systems-society where the negative is produced with the proliferation of the positive. It is not that the "deprived" lack a culture but rather that they lack a fitting to the progressively forming culture. I use the harsher term, thinking it may help me make this point.

The fathers, upon arrival, are largely not employable in the jobs available in Israel; they have not known what it means to work "an eight hour" day; they have not used machines; they have not farmed by modern means. The mothers have seldom been educated, even in the oral tradition, for that has been reserved primarily for the men. The children have been taught, in so far as they have been taught, either in very limited parochial schools or at their father's knee, but not in schools as we know them. The fathers have been the authoritarian heads of their families, following rituals well formed for prescribing how fathers and mothers and children and relatives relate to one another, to the community, and to the outside world.

In the new setting, however, the community and the outside world are greatly changed. Facing outward from the home, the fathers do not have so sure a hand. Often the mothers can get work when the fathers cannot, and they can do better. The children, on their own, can often learn more quickly what is to be done to make the necessary fitting. Though, inside the home, the way of the father may still remain as bond, and the family kept in tact in that domain (there are few broken homes), the major guiding hand in the adjustments to be made in the outer world is the state.

The children are delivered into the hands of the educational system, and the father and his family are delivered into the hands of the welfare system, the settlement, the factory or farm, with appropriate placement in job training, labor union, langauge school, etc. The transition is abrupt, bridging many generations in one quick swoop, calling for more change immediately than we, here in the United States, have undergone in generations.

Fathers and mothers often think of themselves as the generation which is expendable in accomplishing, at last, the deliverance of their family into the homeland. What matters now, as they see it, is what their children can do in fitting themselves for a successful life in the new surroundings. What this means, as the parents see it now, is what the children can do in school, for school is now the major path to salvation for the family in its future in this land. That the school is seen so is revealed in the fact that these parents, generally, will not criticize the teacher or the school for whatever goes wrong; rather they will put the blame on themselves or on their children. Who can blame the savior! Motivation for school success is, therefore, high, though these parents can only guess what the real pathways to success may be; failure is patently tragic.

Picture these families in Morocco, or Yemen, or Iraq where the image projected upon them has been that of Jew, distinguished thereby from Moroccan, Yemenite, or Iraqui; picture them again, arrived in Israel, where, their countrymen now being Jews, the image projected upon them is that of Moroccan, Yemenite, or Iraqui. That which they are, they were not; that which they were, they are not.

These are the culturally deprived of whom we speak.

One important and compelling fact I have not yet made plain. Two-thirds of present births in the Jewish population of Israel come from the homes of these culturally deprived. Israel is a democratic state. These children may, one day not far away, be in the majority. The fate of Israel may well rest in their hands.[2]

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[2]Whether or not this population becomes the actual majority at a future date depends on further immigration and on subsequent birth rates. The prospect, however, is clearly evident.

This gives to the problem of educating the culturally deprived an urgency there which we do not so clearly sense here. We expect our minorities to remain minorities; but in Isreal, the minorities may well become the majority. There is, therefore, an intensity of perception and action when dealing with education of the culturally deprived in Israel which we do not know here.

Particularly, she has insight into the inner world of these children, and she has come to think of this problem at the level of national policy. I want to report a bit from both these perspectives, picking those items most readily relevant to our own situation as we might see it if we could see it as clearly as it must be seen in Israel.

What I report comes from the work of the Szold Institute in Jerusalem. This is the research and developmental agency for the Ministry of Education. My materials on the inner world of the children come from Dr. Sarah Smilansky and her work with pre-school children; it is in these children that the consequence of cultural difference is perhaps most clearly evident. My materials on policy come from Dr. Moshe Smilansky's work, he being then the Director of the Institute. I worked intimately with the Smilanskys and the staff of the Institute, January to June, 1964.

The inner world of the pre-school child from the Oriental home is significantly different from the inner world of the child from the Western home. The significance of the difference comes clearly to light when children enter the first grade. The Western children are prepared for the schooling game; the Oriental children are not. (Schooling is a given game, and the players need to know how to carry on the game).

The differences show up in the response to a battery of some thirty tests given at the time of entrance. Extensive observations had been made of what first grade teachers actually require of their students--the words they use, the skills they presume the children to have, the rituals required in the course of the day. The tests were constructed to check on the degree to which children are equipped to respond in the way teachers presume them to be able to respond at the time of school entrance. The tests were as follows: the ability,

1. to physically see and hear
2. to understand what the teacher says, the words he uses
3. to repeat what the teacher says
4. to concentrate while listening to the teacher
5. to know words and letters can say something
6. to understand words as concepts
7. to perceive likenesses and differences in symbols which are written
8. to tell what a picture says
9. to discriminate colors
10. to discriminate sounds which distinguish between words and between letters
11. to remember
12. to relate pictures and words to experience
13. to know what to do with common objects and situations in school
14. to know names for parts of the body
15. to be able to add and subtract up to 10
16. to count up to 20
17. to differentiate the sizes of objects and arrange in order
18. to deal in analogies
19. to deal in comparative concepts common in arithmetic
20. to make judgments of what belongs and doesn't belong, to classify
21. to select from his knowledge and information items which are relevant to the problems at hand

22. to see a part as related to a whole
23. to be able to reason
24. to define something not present, to imagine
25. to plan and to act according to plan
26. to concentrate on organizing his expression
27. to believe in himself as a learner
28. to follow the teacher's instructions
29. to get satisfaction out of the rewards the teacher gives
30. to ask the teacher for aid when needed
31. to accept the teacher's criticism and use it
32. to believe the teacher is able to teach him

The majority of Western children were able performers on these tests; the majority of Orientals were not. The relevant consequence is that while four-fifths of the Westerns were able to read by the end of the first grade, four-fifths of the Orientals were not. On arithmetic the Orientals did better, but still significantly less well than the Westerns, i.e. two-fifths of the Orientals failing to one-seventh of the Westerns.[3]

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[3]"Evaluating educational achievements," M. Smilansky and L. Adar, (eds.); Unesco Educational Studies and Documents; No. 42 (1961)

Why are these Oriental children so ill equipped for the schooling game? What do they have in their inner world which fits them so poorly to the outer world of the school room while the Westerns are fitted so much better? What is this schooling game?

The heart of the schooling game is communication, primarily communication between the teacher and the student. In communication, the teacher is a sender and a receiver; the student is a sender and a receiver. What the teacher sends, the student needs be able to receive; what the student sends, the teacher needs be able to receive. As the teacher receives a particular sending from the student, the teacher needs be able to organize a response which is relevant to what the student can next receive and use, the student, receiving, then organizing his response to be relevant to what the teacher

can next receive and use, and thus to continue the sequence of communication. As each receives and sends, he has to be able to project into the inner world of the other and to sense what is forming there. Then his communication can be meaningful (a means) to the sequential and emergent development of the communication. Otherwise communication fails; education fails.

A large percentage of the Oriental children were failing because they were not able to enter well into this game. They were not able to receive, organize in their own minds, and then send communications which were relevant to what the teachers were accustomed to receiving, organizing, and sending to the students. The students were not able to project into the inner world of the teachers and the teachers were not able to project into the inner world of the students. The communicative chain broke down.

Evidence of this was contained in the test results. The tests had been built from observations on what teachers were accustomed to receiving, organizing, and sending. The students were then tested to check the degree to which they could receive such sendings, organize relevant response, and send back meaningful communications in return. The first ten of the tests focused on abilities to receive (to physically see and hear, to understand the words the teacher used, to repeat what the teacher has said, to know that words and letters can say something, to differentiate words on a page, to differentiate sounds, colors, etc.); the next seventeen focused on ability to organize response in their own minds (to remember, to reason, to judge, to be able to add and subtract up to 10, to deal in analogies, to select from his knowledge and information items which are relevant to the problems at hand, etc.); the final five focused on ability to send messages which would fit to the inner world of the teacher (i.e. to follow the teacher's instructions, to get satisfaction out of the rewards the teacher gives,

to ask the teacher for aid when the student needs it, to accept the teacher's criticism and use it, to believe the teacher is able to teach him). The Oriental children failed in their abilities to receive, organize, and send as required by teachers in the accustomed schooling game.

What is the inner world of these children? Obviously, they have one, formed from their experience to date, primarily in their homes. What do these culturally deprived homes provide by way of experience for these children?

Observations in these homes reveal a set of presumptions underlying communication between parent and child which are significantly different from presumptions of the Western home. In Western homes, parents seek direct and intimate communication with their children on the premise that what the child has to offer the parent by way of communication of his own is deeply important to the parent. We fairly dote on the response of a baby that lets us know that the baby has recognized us as someone with whom he is joined in intimate concourse. He smiles, we smile; he babbles non-sense sounds, we babble non-sense sounds in return; he acts as though he may recognize his daddy as his one particular daddy, and his daddy goes into paroxims of delight. This is the shape of our love, our communication, our communal bond. We take ourselves to be persons; we take him to be a person, and we want this personhood to expand and develop.

We like ourselves to be understandable creatures to the child, and we explain ourselves and our acts so that we may be understandable. We like the world to be an understandable place, and we explain the world so that it may be understandable. We want the child to be free to act in his own way, as a person important in his own right, provided he com-

prehends with reason what he is doing and can give reasonable explanation for his acts. We put the stress on intelligent comprehension rather than on the specific forms of specific acts, ritualistically pursued.

In consequence, we have children with whom we can communicate; there is responsible give and take between adult and child; each is given the chance to project into the inner world of the other and to order his response with that in mind. Communication can grow and the mind of the child can grow, nourished by enlarging concepts provided him by the enlarged world of the adult. We have a mind-growing system, and we depend on that system to develop a child from birth to adulthood.

Upon entering school, our children, and the children of Western parents in Israel, are able then to continue with the game as provided in the school setting. Our children know how to carry on the dialogue, and they have the conceptual equipment to join the teacher in the sort of exchanges the school expects. The children know how to take "the role of the teacher," and they know how to give a role to themselves and to one another in the communal game. As they mature, they are in position to internalize the role of the teacher and to become teachers of themselves.

But the Oriental children, no! In the Oriental homes, the children are not led into communication with their parents in the same intimate way. Children are seen as having a world of their own, apart from the world of the parents. Children are to communicate primarily with children; adults are to communicate primarily with adults. There is, of course, the communication needed for the operation of the home, and there is affection, but the projection of the parents on the child is not that of a "person" but that of a "role." The child is to take the role of a child and is to

remain within the confines of that role, while the parents, taking their roles as well, remain within the confines of their roles. The role of childhood is made more commanding than the personhood of the child. There are prescriptions for behavior in that role and the home is governed with those prescriptions in mind.

Hence the child is not seen as one to whom the parents talk in intimate concourse, exchanging views of the world and making plain to one another how the inner viewing goes. There is little challenge to project into the inner world of the other and to order response with that in mind. There is little playing with the child. Communication is stultified, the child nourished little by the enlarging concepts of the world as the adults may know it. The system is not a mind-growing system, but a regimen. The communication from parent to child is to maintain that regimen.

Not having had "person-to-person" communication with their parents, the Oriental children do not know how to respond to the adult offered them in the school setting. They do not know what to do with the teacher. They will often sit, pleasantly and placidly at their school benches, a model of decorum as they have had it taught to them by their adults at home, and not understand what the teacher is for, or, really, why they are in the school setting. They know few of the words depended upon; they can make few of the discriminations required.

They are not stupid children; they are not mentally handicapped as that term is technically used in the U.S.A.; they are outwardly healthy, well fed, normal youngsters who know that they are supposed to do the right thing. But what the right thing is, they do not know. Their frequently conforming behavior, in what they <u>do</u> know to do, is seductively decep-

tive to teachers who like a well-ordered classroom; the teachers can be so easily fooled if they rest their judgments on superficial decorum and do not penetrate to the inner world of these children to make communication with what these children do have in their experience.

If the children cannot give meaning to the role of the teacher, they cannot give meaning, either, to other roles of adults as Western children are able to do. This came clearly to light in the kindergartens where the children were offered the chance to do dramatic play.[4] The Western children

[4] "An experiment to promote cognitive abilities, impart basic information and modify attitudes of pre-school, culturally deprived, children through the development and improvement of their socio-dramatic free play," S. Smilansky, 1965. A manuscript subsequently to be published.

take easily to "playing house," or "doctor," or "bus driver;" they have been able to do this since age three; by the time of their entrance into kindergarten, age five, they have had a rich store of experience in such play. But the Oriental children, on arriving at kindergarten at age five, are unable to enter into dramatic play.

(On first confronting this phenomenon, I was really set back on my haunches. I had blithely presumed that all children, the world over, did dramatic play as an inevitable and natural part of their being children. That anything else could be the case had never crossed my mind. Western man is a parochial man; so I was to learn that day. There are many presumptions I am open to doubt, now, as a matter of sheer principle. It takes so long to become a citizen of the world).

Consider dramatic play, what it invites, allows, and requires. Two, three, or four children join together to spontaneously act out an emergent theme by their dialogue. They say, "let's play house," one taking the role

of father, one of mother, one of grandmother, one of baby, and, with a few items of symbolic equipment, begin their communal game.

Each child is operating in a system of events which are interlocked by "the play" to provide a circumstance in which he can continue to act "within a role," and experience, from that position, what it is like to be a creature who can make choices, organize acts, be spontaneously creative, compose something new, have his offering accepted and see its transformation into something new which returns to him as relevant for his further choosing, organizing, creating, etc. in a continuing cycle. He can sense himself as the seat of his world and the source of his experiencing; he can realize what it is like to have a personal and significant effect on what happens in the world with him in it. He can realize his environment as responsive to him and nurturant of him. He can freely form his own composition, within the limits provided by the role, the play, and the players. As new acts form in the continuing flow, he can sense the sequence and the emerging variations that are possible and occurring in it, making it richer as it grows. He can be "caught by the drama" and grow within its growth as it unfolds before him and within him. As the variations appear, he can also sense the repetition of the core "truths" that he is a "valuable," "organized," "spontaneous," "expressive," "relevant," "free," "accepted," "creative," "growing" creature. He is able to form his world and to respond, with his <u>own</u> meaning, to the forms offered by it. He can sense what it means to be a creator in the midst of creation-under-way.

Dramatic play is an ideal medium by which children, without the present threat of overpowering adults and impossible adult requirements,

can, in communication with one another, approximate the adult world as they have come to know it. They get their start on self-teaching by which they can evolve with the adult world in mind.

But for the Oriental children, dramatic play is not a possibility (unless they get specific adult aid). They have been swallowed up in their "only-for-children" role; not being persons bigger than the role they take, they are unable to take roles for what they are not. One cannot move in and out of varied roles unless he takes himself to be a "person," for it is as the level of being persons that one has a psychological mechanism which can grant permission to move into this "as-if-ness" and then that. Lacking that mechanism, there is no way to move, and, lacking that, no way to take on dramatic play.

Given nine weeks of adult guidance, the Oriental children can begin to take hold. As they do, there is much they reveal about their inner world. The following comes to light in Dr. Sarah Smilansky's work:

1. Like Westerns, Orientals take themes and perform in roles which represent the adult world they know. They, too, use dramatic play to approximate that world, when they can do dramatic play at all.

2. Westerns are able to go much further in approximating the adult world; they can move readily into initiating roles, their problems being the relatively refined ones of getting specific acts and dialogue to contribute smoothly to the emerging theme. Orientals have difficulty in the first stages, i.e. in getting into their roles at all; their play is relatively short lived.

3. Westerns can comprehend several roles working spontaneously together within the theme; they are able to govern their own acts so that the group can work out the theme as a group. Orientals have difficulty

comprehending more than one role--the role they, themselves, take; their group play tends to quickly dissipate.

4. Westerns focus their attention on the emerging theme and on getting things to work out so that the theme can develop and the play continue; this is their primary concern. Orientals are unable to project themselves strongly into the theme; their attention is focused on the status hierarchy which may be implicit in the play, and on getting and maintaining the best status.

5. Westerns use talk to express themselves and simultaneously to communicate to others something which may be usable by them in the further progression of the play; while talking, they are also listening for cues from others which may be useful in forming their own next acts. Orientals limit talk to expressing themselves, not thinking much of others, not expecting others to listen much, and not expecting, either, to do much listening themselves.

6. Westerns use toys as symbolic "props" for their play, readily sharing these props within the group, taking them flexibly for ready imaginative use. Orientals use toys in relatively compulsive fashion, seizing on them as necessary symbols of authority, and using them for a narrow range of acts.

7. Westerns have leaders who take, as their primary obligation, the arrangement of circumstances so that all in the group are able to continue in the progression of the emerging play. Orientals have leaders who, seizing the primary toy, seize also the primary power and, thereafter, give orders to any others whom they may be able to entice into accepting their authority.

8. Westerns show little aggression against one another, seeing one another as valuable for what each can contribute to a richer play. Orientals show much aggression against one another, seeing one another as competitors for the same limited honor.

9. Westerns criticize to keep one another in line with respect to the emerging play; their criticism is instrumental to something valued by all and, therefore, not personal in tone. Orientals use criticism in personal ways, seeking to damage those who would compete with them.

10. Westerns laugh <u>with</u> one another; Orientals laugh <u>at</u> one another.

11. Westerns, in settling their disputes about what is proper to include in the play, cite what they know from their own experience with adults; in cases where individuals have had differing experiences, they will include the differences if it is reasonable to believe that adults actually did behave in the differing way. Orientals, in settling similar disputes, cite what they individually know and insist that that is the right way and the only way.

These insights into the inner world of these Oriental children show how deep and how pervasive inherited culture already is by schooling age.

The pattern of culture ingested by these Oriental children is not of an order fitting well to the order Western teachers would presume for children ready to enter the schooling game. The lack of fit is so profound that, in a democratic nation, having a majority of their newborn from this background, new designs for education are a must. A few timid and condescending modifications, holding yet to thought forms of the past, will not do. A fresh comprehension is necessary.

Let me now state for you some of the emerging thought in Israel which is leading into the re-design of the educational program. I am here indebted to Dr. Moshe Smilansky.

The difference between Western and Oriental cultures is so great that an educational program will have to be designed which is fitted particularly to the Oriental child. This program will have to begin at a very early age, perhaps as early as the age of two, for the problem is to provide a second and a different set of presumptions for looking at the world and one's way of progressing in it. The basic rules of the game of life are in-tuned at a very early age. The pre-school age is the most important age, and what is done there will have to be consciously designed as developmental. The custodial function is not enough.

This special program will have to continue up the educational ladder until the children have an inner world which fits to the presumptions of a modern society, and they are free to join their Western cohorts in the forward formings of that society. This program will have to be operative, all the way, on sound and realistic knowledge of what these children have in their inner world. This means testing programs which are truly diagnostic and not merely gatekeeping. This means teachers who can project into the inner world of these children and who can, thereby, communicate with those who are in it. This means curricular materials which fit to this communicative net.

This means a school setting in which Westerns are not themselves being deprived of development while the Orientals are being served. In communities where both groups attend the same schools, the programs need be such that each child can be served according to his inner orientation

and his inner need. Testing programs, truly diagnostic, need serve the total lot, and the teaching that ensues needs be relevant to what is, in truth, required for development. This means values need to rest, not on tradition as prescriptive of the schooling game, but on intelligence concerning development of the young, and how development proceeds. The situation forces an open look, a new realization of what the education of anyone entails, no matter what his background. Designing progress for the Oriental forces comprehension of the basic grounds for progress of the Western child as well, making clear the grounds for progress in any nation that seeks development.

In communities where the population is wholly Oriental or wholly Western, the programs need be such that, fitting those who are there, they serve development as the Israeli aim. Differentiated as the curricular materials and teaching programs then become, the two programs do not then appear the same. To those who are superficial in their judgment, this difference may then appear as "inequality," one being judged less worthy than the other because less familiar. But this view of "equality" needs give way to a deeper view where "equality" is seen to mean, for a society, equal to the tasks at hand for the development of that society and its peoples.

Concepts of "formal equality," emphasizing equal in formalisms, need give way to concepts of "functional equality," emphasizing equal to the functioning required, for Israel, or any land, survives and grows only as it can carry out what growth requires. This is law of nature, deeper yet than laws or views of men.

"Formal equality," so often meaning, for the young, an equal chance to take the same gate-keeping examinations for posts in the society, is no equality at all for those who do not come to the examinations equally prepared. And equal preparation means unequal means if the Oriental child is to receive the same development from his inner world as that received by his Western kin. It will take more money, more effort, more concentration, more personal commitment from those adults of Western root who have responsibility for the design. It will take more from the "privileged" to serve the "deprived" than the "privileged" are required to give to their own kind. Unequal means are needed to net an "equal" end.

In designing the program for Oriental children, there is nothing to be borrowed from. One cannot presume to merely adapt what has been developed in Western lands for those who are there termed the "handicapped," for these children in Israel are not thus handicapped. One cannot presume to adapt what has been developed for the Westerns, merely slowing it in pace and reducing it in scope, as has been so often tried here for those we term the "slow learners."

These children in Israel are normal, with a normal range of intelligence, as has repeatedly been proven in circumstances where they had the chance to gain the inner world the Western children inherit. Suitable programs have boosted the I.Q. by as much as twenty points and more. Dramatic play, used as a teaching device, has helped to give these children, on entrance into school, a boost sufficient to make them the equals of recent immigrants from the West. Enrichment programs at the junior high school level for the more able of these children have equipped them to enter secondary school with promise for real success. Experimental programs for the gifted at the

secondary level have turned out youth who can compete with their suburbanite friends for admission into university and advanced levels of education. The ability is there; the problem is to fit an education to its development.

This means re-tooling the minds of the teachers who have come from Western roots. These teachers, even as you and I, are not conscious of their culture, in its roots, until that culture doesn't work. Discovering this, one is truly smitten. But discovering it, one then has a question of the utmost importance and illumination; why doesn't it work? One has then to tackle the problem by consciously and painstakingly searching for the inner world of those to whom he cannot fit, finding, in the course of it, his own. Ingesting into oneself a culture one has not himself inherited, one, in truth, becomes re-made. This is the re-making we are asking of these children; it is inescapable that we be re-made in order to serve their re-making. Thus for the teachers who are there to serve.

I need not go on; you can sense the train.

The glory of this enterprise is that, in serving the need and in becoming, in no small measure, re-made himself, a man comes closer, ever so much closer, to becoming a universal man. He penetrates to truths about himself, his world, and human life he would not, otherwise, have come so near to knowing. His own existence, distilled, becomes more worthy of existence in this time and place.

This <u>is</u> one world. Our human fate is bound up, inextricably, in the fate of all our kind. In the laboratory of Israel, this is one pounding, haunting, dawning, surging knowing. It comes on those ancient trails and in the clatter of the modern street. The faces there are the faces of all

men--Western, African, Oriental. Is western man adequate to include all human kind in the progression he has released into the world?

The test is there, and, I cannot help feeling, the test is also here in America. This is laboratory, too, and this is where it is made possible to see and feel the splittings in the worlds of men so closely bound together; and to sense, I trust, the fate of men, not only here but elsewhere in this country and in the world, if way be <u>not</u> found to heal the whole.